

By STUART EARP: Wycombe Wanderers 0, Hayes 2

A SIX match unbeaten run built up over the last month and including five victories, was rudely shattered on Tuesday night when Wycombe Wanderers crashed 2-0 to Hayes in the Isthmian League Premier Division.

This defeat, Wycombe's fourth of the season, ranks on a par with the Tooting and Mitcham debacle when they crashed at home by the same margin on September 10.

It was a night when nothing, but nothing went right for Wycombe. Without two key players they struggled to string more than a couple of passes together and even the veteran Tony Horseman was out of sorts, missing a penalty and a golden chance.

Without detracting from Hayes' performance, which incidentally completed the double of Wanderers, the Middlesex team looked ordinary. Big and strong they were clumsy at the back and over aggressive in mid-field. But every one of them gave 100 per cent, ran like hares and refused to allow Wycombe the time to play.

It was a destructive mission in keeping with a mid-table side with only a handful of goals, but they played to their strengths (assisted by Wycombe) and completely outfought the home side. When it came down to heart, Wanderers were second best and never matched Hayes' competitive spirit all evening.

Obviously Mick Holifield and Bob Davies, two regulars, were missed but the truth is that only a couple of players looked anything like their best, Paul Birdseye and Derek Harris. The rest had stinkers.

It is easy to blame front runners for not scoring goals but the service from midfield was some of the worst this season. Roger Day, the one man who could have dictated the game for the Blues, was hustled out of it and looked too slow while Graham Mackenzie and John Priestley will both want to forget the game as quickly as possible.

SHAKY DEFENCE

Even the defence, normally the cornerstone of this side, looked shaky and ragged. True, they were under more and more pressure but they lost their composure to such an extent that the defeat might have been heavier. That loss of composure and frustration was illustrated in the last seconds when Alan Phillips and Terry Brown were about to indulge in a punch-up before the

referee's final whistle thankfully brought an end to the game.

That wasn't the only unpleasant incident in the game for their were a series of fouls that went unpunished by a weak referee whose laxity did much to help Hayes.

Wanderers got the tactics all wrong from the start. Facing a back four which must be among the tallest in the Isthmian League, they were under instructions to keep the ball on the ground. Hayes, however, got so many men between the player in possession and the ball that there was seldom any room for the pass. Whenever a player received the ball he was immediately put under pressure and the passes eventually got higher and higher which suited Hayes perfectly.

Even so, Wycombe had their chances. Dylan Evans, who deteriorated after a useful start, set up a chance for Mackenzie which goalkeeper Alan Cox couldn't hold but Laurie Craker cleared the danger. A brilliant run by Derek Harris past former Wycombe full back Dave Bullock promised much but Wanderers were finding it increasingly difficult to score when Hayes were awarded a shock penalty after 21 minutes.

Phillips only half cleared in his penalty area and Bobby Wiles was about to shoot for goal when he was nudged from behind by Priestley. Wiles went down and referee Cullen awarded the spot kick which Mick McGovern

drove perfectly into the corner, hitting the back stanchion.

Hayes dominated the rest of the half and Neil Bunker should have increased the lead before Wanderers, who had been chased and harried unmercifully, heard the welcome sound of the half-time whistle.

PENALTY MISS

Three incidents in the first ten minutes of the second half should have changed the game around completely in Wycombe's favour. After 47 minutes Harris sent in a shot from Farouk Quraishi's cross which Cox somehow parried. Then three minutes later Wanderers were awarded a penalty when Wiles handled. As Horseman lined up to take it at least four Hayes players pointed to Cox that the kick would go up the slope. Their advice was sound and the goalkeeper blocked the kick and then spread himself at Harris' feet to parry the rebound.

Horseman missed out again in the 54th minute when Harris put him clean through the defence. He ran 25 yards unopposed but as Cox came out to cut him off, 'Bodger' lost control and allowed the 'keeper to dispossess him.

You won't get better chances than that and those incidents seemed to rip the heart out of Wycombe.

From then on Hayes looked the only winners and it was no surprise when Brown scored a second in the 72nd minute. Keith Mead gave the ball away with a needless back heel that fell short, Gordon Bartlett put Brown away and he made a much better job of the breakaway than Horseman.

Substitute Howard Kennedy gave the Blues a ray of hope with a powerful free kick that almost knocked Cox off his feet but only a fine save by Spittle from Brown prevented a heavier defeat in the closing stages.

WYCOMBE: P. Spittle, P. Birdseye, K. Mead, A. Phillips, F. Quraishi, G. Mackenzie, R. Day, J. Priestley (sub H. Kennedy 66 mins), A. Horseman, D. Harris, D. Evans.

HAYES: A. Cox, D. Nelms, R. Leather, R. Goldthorpe, D. Bullock, R. Wiles, L. Craker, M. McGovern, T. Brown, N. Bunker, G. Bartlett. Sub A. Carrington (not used).

Half-time: 0-1. **Goalscorers:** Hayes — McGovern pen (21), Brown (72).

Referee: D. Cullen (Watford).

Attendance: 1,100.

Latest table

ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION (up to and inc 4/10/77)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	13	10	2	1	25	9	32
Tooting	13	10	0	3	20	10	30
Wycombe	14	8	2	4	23	15	26
Leatherhead	12	7	3	2	24	10	24
Sutton	12	7	2	3	16	10	23
Hitchin	13	7	2	4	20	16	23
Staines	12	6	4	2	17	13	22
Carshalton	11	6	3	2	20	11	21
Dagenham	14	6	3	5	24	23	21
Barking	12	6	1	5	20	16	19
Hendon	14	5	4	5	22	20	19
Boreham Wood	12	5	2	5	17	20	17
Hayes	11	4	4	3	9	8	16
Walthamstow	11	4	3	4	13	15	15
Croydon	12	4	2	6	13	15	14
Southall	12	2	4	6	12	17	10
Kingstonian	13	2	4	7	14	20	10
Tilbury	12	2	4	6	15	22	10
Woking	11	2	1	8	10	20	7
Leytonstone	11	1	3	7	11	23	6
Slough	9	1	2	6	10	19	5
Stortford	14	0	3	11	14	37	3

DAVIES RETURN?

BOB DAVIES, the Wycombe Wanderers right back who has missed the last two games through injury should be fit for the Blues' Isthmian League Premier Division meeting with bottom-of-the-table Bishop's Stortford at Loakes Park tomorrow (Saturday).

This must be good news for Wanderers after Tuesday's disastrous defeat at home to Hayes. If Davies plays it will allow Farouk Quraishi to return to midfield for Mick Holifield, who is on holiday.

On paper, Wycombe should

prove far too strong for a Stortford side who have picked up just three points from 14 league outings. Recent results, however, suggests that the Hertfordshire side are pulling out of the doldrums.

Stortford have drawn their last two matches at home to Hayes (1-1) and at Boreham Wood (1-1) and indeed, it was only a goal in the last five minutes in the latter fixture that robbed them of their first victory.

Manager since the start of the season Brian Grant was sacked before last week's draw against

Hayes and Ron Duke has taken over. This is Duke's second spell with the club as he was coach with Ted Hardy when Stortford won the last Amateur Cup final.

At the start of the season Stortford had a complete clear-out of playing staff and only two remain from the previous term. Among the newcomers is Dave Simmons, the former Colchester and Cambridge striker. Simmons, however, is likely to miss tomorrow's match with injury. He is Stortford's top goalscorer with seven.